

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

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MINUTES OF THE VIRTUAL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 7 SEPTEMBER 2020 AT 2.00 PM

MEMBERS PRESENT

(A denotes absent)

Christine Goldstraw OBE – Independent Member (Chair)

Councillor David Ellis – Gedling Borough Council (Vice Chair)

Executive Mayor Andy Abrahams – Mansfield District Council

Councillor Leslie Ayoola – Nottingham City Council - **A**

Councillor Scott Carlton – Newark and Sherwood District Council

Lesley Dalby – Independent Member

Councillor Tony Eaton – Bassetlaw District Council

Councillor Michael Edwards (substitute for Councillor Woodings) – Nottingham City Council

Suma Harding – Independent Member

Councillor Rob Inglis – Rushcliffe Borough Council

Councillor Richard MacRae – Broxtowe Borough Council

Councillor Francis Purdue-Horan - Nottinghamshire County Council

Councillor Helen-Ann Smith (substitute for Councillor Zadrozny) – Ashfield District Council

Bob Vaughan-Newton – Independent Member

Councillor Linda Woodings – Nottingham City Council - **A**

Councillor Jason Zadrozny – Ashfield District Council - **A**

OFFICERS PRESENT

Keith Ford - Team Manager, Democratic Services	}	Nottinghamshire County Council
	}	(NCC - Host Authority)
Pete Barker - Democratic Services Officer	}	

OTHERS PRESENT

Paddy Tipping - Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC)

Craig Guildford - Chief Constable, Notts Police

Kevin Dennis - Chief Executive, Office of PCC (OPCC)

Emma Foody - Deputy PCC

Charlie Radford - Chief Finance Officer, OPCC

Rebecca Atchinson, Senior Public Health and Commissioning Manager at NCC

Anna Clark, Chief Executive of Equation

Mandy Green, Head of Services, Nottinghamshire Women's Aid

Jane Lewis, Community Safety Strategy Manager of the Crime and Drugs Partnership

Yasmin Rehman, Chief Executive of Juno Women's Aid

1a. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 1 JUNE 2020

The minutes of the meeting held on 1 June 2020, having been previously circulated, were agreed as a true and correct record, and were confirmed and signed by the Chair.

1b. MINUTES OF CONFIRMATION HEARING HELD ON 1 JUNE 2020

The minutes of the confirmation hearing held on 1 June 2020, having been previously circulated, were agreed as a true and correct record, and were confirmed and signed by the Chair.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Ayoola, Councillor Woodings and Councillor Zadrozny.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

4. DOMESTIC VIOLENCE UPDATE – POSITION PAPER

The Commissioner introduced the report and informed members that compared with other areas Nottinghamshire was in a relatively good place and that with assistance from the County, City and districts funding had been maintained.

The Commissioner stated that the Force's approach had been reviewed and that the draft review report ('Improving the response to domestic violence and abuse in Nottinghamshire, a whole systems approach') would be circulated for wider consultation after the Panel's discussion today, with publication of the final report due in November. The Commissioner informed the Panel that the pandemic required fresh thought in this area and that the effects on the BAME community also needed to be considered.

Ms Foody, the Deputy Commissioner, then spoke to the report and informed the Panel that the issue was a priority for the Commissioner and one that he had asked her to focus upon. The Deputy Commissioner thanked all the partners that had worked hard to produce the draft report and spoke of the fresh perspective that had been taken and the need to think of the wider context with data available both nationally and locally. The Deputy Commissioner informed the Panel that the report was the final consultation draft and that comments were welcomed.

The Deputy Commissioner stated that the topic was a huge one which was constantly evolving but remained a priority for all the authorities involved. She highlighted some of the highlights within the very detailed review report and referred to the Force's Threat Assessment which was high and which demonstrated the strong response from providers/agencies/the Commissioner who were all working in partnership. The Deputy Commissioner spoke of the trends identified in the report including the prevalence of emotional abuse, financial control, the use of technology, the increased use of knives and adolescents perpetrating violence on parents. The Deputy Commissioner stated that generally figures for Nottingham and Nottinghamshire were higher than in the East Midlands as a whole but that strong arrangements were already in place with campaigns being run and work taking place with the workforce and in schools.

The Deputy Commissioner referred to the work being done by the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Centres (MARAC) and the Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) and the substantial financial investment the Commissioner had made in DV support services. The Deputy Commissioner spoke of her pride in the services provided but stated that there as no room for

complacency - the services needed to grow, some groups were under-represented, for example men and those from a BAME background, and local refuge provision was low. The Deputy Commissioner informed the Panel that since 2017 the results from the Offender Management Scheme had been good and that a bid had been submitted to fund perpetrator programmes.

The Deputy Commissioner then spoke of the effects of COVID and the fact that the last 6 months had been challenging with the restrictions making it more difficult for families and victims to call for help. The Deputy Commissioner informed the Panel that calls had increased by more than 50% than expected and that additional funding had been made available to increase capacity. The Deputy Commissioner stated that it was difficult to assess the impact of COVID but that the death rate was expected to rise and informed the Panel that funding from the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) would cease at the end of 2021 and that increased funding may continue to be required. The Deputy Commissioner concluded by stating that recent times had been challenging but that the arrangements with partners had ensured the response had been strong but that there would be difficult times ahead.

Following the Commissioner's and Deputy Commissioner's statements the Panel raised the following issues:

- In response to the Panel raising the issue of DV peaking at certain times, for example during England football matches, the Deputy Commissioner stated that the Police do use their social media channels to promote services and that it was important that the Police do marry up their communications to inform people where help is available.
- The Panel expressed its concern that the rise in DV incidents was framed positively and sought assurance that this was the case. The Commissioner replied that there were gaps in the data but that there had been an improvement in the recording of incidents along with a greater confidence in reporting such incidents. The Deputy Commissioner confirmed that that the Force was capturing more incidents.
- The Deputy Commissioner informed the Panel that in terms of consultation the draft report has been distributed to the public for comments, that public meetings will be held to capture feedback and that the draft report is available on the Force's website.
- The Panel spoke of the positive benefits of Sanctuary in reducing homelessness and praised the use of 17 Sanctuaries in the City. The Deputy Commissioner stated that the use in the City had been made possible because funding had been increased and that the intention was to roll out this positive option across the County.
- The Panel asked about the need stated in the Executive Summary for more refuges. The Deputy Commissioner replied that the requirement depended on the contents of the forthcoming Bill which would define the provision expected. Jane Lewis, the Community Safety Strategy Manager of the Crime and Drugs Partnership, informed the Panel that she thought the Bill would require an additional 10 refuges to the existing total of 37 and that an extra £1m in funding would be needed to fulfil all the statutory duties, though as it was unlikely that this amount of extra funding would be forthcoming difficult choices would have to be made.
- The Panel brought up the subject of male victims of DV and though most victims of DV are female, the Deputy Commissioner acknowledged that the understanding of the male problem needed to improve. The Deputy Commissioner informed the Panel that men are

less likely to use refuges than women but that there were other options available to them. The Deputy Commissioner stated that much work had been undertaken in the last year on the problem, that men do suffer and do need supporting.

- The Panel raised concern that at the same time as incidents of DV were increasing the number of prosecutions and convictions was decreasing. The Deputy Commissioner responded by informing the Panel that victims do not always want to go down the criminal justice route. The Chief Constable stated that it is possible to carry out victimless prosecutions with evidence from body worn video, recordings of 999 calls and neighbours' statements, but that the CPS has a very high threshold for charging in such cases.

Representatives from the organisations involved in DV were then given the opportunity to address the Panel:

Yasmin Rehman, Chief Executive of Juno Women's Aid

Ms Rehman paid tribute to the wide range of services available in Nottinghamshire, which is not the case in other areas, and spoke of the well-developed eco system in the County and the dedicated staff involved. Ms Rehman informed the Panel of the exponential rise in the demand for services that had occurred in the past year, an increase of 224%, with survivors regularly threatening suicide. Ms Rehman spoke of the effects of COVID and informed the Panel that she expected to see a rise in DV cases as a result. In terms of the criminal justice system, Ms Rehman informed the Panel that tactical complaints from the father were often made against her organisation and that it was difficult to unpick exactly what was happening.

Mandy Green, Head of Services, Nottinghamshire Women's Aid

Ms Green echoed the points made by Ms Rehman and spoke of the strangeness of the current situation where the impact of COVID was still unknown. Ms Green informed the Panel that her organisation had seen a rise in the numbers of women and children accessing support and spoke of the challenges around safeguarding, referring to the difficulties in contacting victims where they might live with the perpetrator. Ms Green spoke about the 2 refuges in North Notts that had remained open safely during the pandemic despite the challenge of having shared facilities. Ms Green informed the Panel that staff were available for 100% of the time as it was felt that it was important for victims to receive a welcoming response at a safe base with someone to talk to.

Ms Green informed the Panel about the work of the Domestic Abuse Support Workers (DASW) and how there had been a large increase in the demand for their services. Ms Green told the Panel that there would be 2 DASWs on duty to cope with incoming calls which could come from those already being supported or from those thinking of leaving relationships. Ms Green stated that this work was time consuming and that there were only so many incoming lines available at any one time.

Ms Green informed the Panel that while some workers had been able to return to work, with social distancing being practised, use was being made of the phone and Teams software for virtual meetings. In terms of children and young people, they were being contacted when it was safe to do so with Zoom and Teams being used for virtual meetings. Ms Green informed the

Panel that worksheets were also being used with children and young people, these were posted out weekly so the recipients are kept informed as to which session is to be expected and Ms Green informed the Panel that this system was working for the older clients.

Ms Green informed the Panel that at the beginning of the pandemic referrals to MARAC had decreased but that the number of cases had increased by 25 recently. Ms Green told the Panel that Zoom and Teams were being used to support victims but that this was affected by where and how the victim lived and what technology was available in each case. Ms Green spoke of the well-developed partnerships around schools, which were now back, and also the good relationship the organisation had with the magistrates' courts.

Ms Green informed the Panel that it was a worrying time with demand increasing, the difficulty of predicting the effects of the pandemic, the fact that it will take a year for some group programmes to catch up and deliver and whether there will be localised increases in demand now that the schools are back, but Ms Green informed the Panel that the aim was to make sure that all received the support they needed.

Anna Clark, Chief Executive of Equation

Ms Clark paid tribute to the quality of support available in Nottinghamshire and emphasised the importance of training. Ms Clark informed the Panel that one of the positive aspects of COVID was that it had allowed the development of a communications strategy with a consistent message. Ms Clark spoke of the work that had been undertaken in the past in schools and informed the Panel that when restrictions were lifted that work, which had taken place over the last 15 years, would help children to speak out.

The Chair thanked all of those involved in the production of the report and requested that the next update include a commentary on the effects of COVID on the CPS/courts service.

RESOLVED 2020/019

That the contents of the report be noted.

5. WORK PROGRAMME

Mr Ford introduced the report and informed the Panel that this was the usual report drawn up in consultation with the Commissioner's office. Mr Ford informed members that it was planned to bring a report to a future meeting of the Panel on findings of Part One of the Home Office Review in to the role of Police and Crime Commissioners. Mr Ford expressed his hope that the national PCP Conference organised by Frontline and due to be held in November would still go ahead, albeit with social distancing in place.

RESOLVED 2020/020

That the contents of the report be noted.

6. POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER'S UPDATE REPORT TO JUNE 2020

The Commissioner introduced the report and spoke of the budget outturn with the overspend of £92k being smaller than previously forecast due to the impact of COVID. The Commissioner referred to the two capital schemes of the Bridewell and the Joint HQs and informed the Panel that both projects were broadly on track with good progress being made in difficult conditions. The Commissioner spoke of the effects of COVID on policing and informed the Panel that crime rates had fallen significantly at the peak of the pandemic, both locally and nationally, but that coming out of lockdown crimes are returning to their former levels with some offences such as DV reaching higher rates than previously, though not as high as had been anticipated.

The Commissioner then spoke of the work being undertaken with those from the BAME community and the demonstrations being held in the UK as a result of the death of George Floyd and others, including in Nottinghamshire. The Commissioner informed the Panel that the policing of the demonstration at the Forest recreation ground had been highlighted as an exemplar by the Home Affairs Select Committee. The Commissioner referred to the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement and informed the Panel that it was mainly young people involved with new leaders emerging in the community. The Commissioner stated that he thought it was an opportunity for change with discussions being held as to the way forward with proposals and a timetable to be published in the near future. The Commissioner stated that he thought the position in Nottinghamshire was a good one with work with the BAME community a priority where good progress continued to be made. The Commissioner informed the Panel that while Stop and Search had increased significantly in Nottinghamshire, knife crime had reduced, which bucked the national trend.

The Commissioner informed the Panel that the Force was recruiting heavily with 147 officers appointed last year and while there had been no final confirmation from the Home Office regarding funding it was hoped to recruit a further 150 officers this year. The Commissioner informed the Panel that the Force was aspiring to become the first police force in the UK to be proportionately representative of the community it serves (11.2% BAME) and stated that at 7% the Force was over half way there. The Commissioner spoke of the need to refresh the way work with the BAME community was carried out and informed the Panel that discussions were ongoing with the first meeting of the Community Listening Group due to take place. The Commissioner informed members that an independent panel would be set up to advise the police on such issues as handcuffs, tasers and the use of force.

Following the Commissioner's statement the Panel raised the following issues:

- The Panel welcomed the BAME case study contained in the report ('Improving BAME Experiences of Policing In Nottinghamshire') and questioned the Commissioner about hate crime. The Commissioner replied that statistics showed that such incidents tended to peak during national and international events, for example Brexit, the election of the US president, a terrorist incident or a pandemic. The Commissioner spoke of the need to examine the figures carefully and gave the example of offences against the Chinese community which were small in number but appeared high when expressed as a percentage. The Commissioner informed the Panel that he was aware there had been concern about which groups were being issued with fixed penalty notices as a result of the COVID measures and that some disproportionality had occurred, but that in Nottinghamshire the number of notices issued was one of the lowest in the country.
- The Panel queried whether intelligence led stop and search could be classed as racial profiling. The Chief Constable stated that this was absolutely not the case and informed members that the level of complaints was very low with figures which showed knife seizures up 13% proving that the police were targeting the right people.
- The Panel asked the Commissioner about missing persons and whether it was possible to put preventative measures in place. The Commissioner replied that the Force has one of the few dedicated missing persons teams in the country which identifies vulnerable people and does try to intervene. The Chief Constable informed members that the force worked closely with care providers and the existence of the dedicated team allowed its members to become familiar with where missing people might be found.

- The Panel brought up the subject of anti-social behaviour (ASB) which had increased during lockdown. The Commissioner responded by informing the Panel that the majority of complaints to the Police had been from people complaining about others ignoring the restrictions imposed because of COVID. The Commissioner explained that a national discussion about police involvement was taking place but that there are only guidelines in place and that some of the messages from government have not been as helpful as they might have been.
- The Commissioner responded to a question about county lines by stating that this was a top priority for government, that this was not a new development but one now known by a different name, and that there was evidence to suggest this activity was more widespread in rural areas. The Commissioner informed the Panel that work was ongoing to determine what needed to be done at a local, regional and national level and that progress should be seen in the next 12 months. The Chief Constable informed members that the force was carrying out more covert work with the tracking of Nottinghamshire children who travelled elsewhere resulting in drug seizures outside the county.
- The Commissioner informed the Panel that he was aware of the drugs problem in the Meadows and that work was in hand.
- The Commissioner responded to a query about begging and informed members that the Force was keen to work with the City to find a solution.
- The Panel referred to the recent march in the city centre and the Commissioner stated that a number of causes were represented by the marchers with no consistent or coherent message emerging as a result. The Commissioner informed the Panel that no arrests had been made, though there were some anxious moments on the day.
- The Commissioner undertook to visit the Harworth & Bircotes area with Inspector Bellamy but stated that the crime figures for the area did not seem to warrant the level of concern expressed by local councillors. In reply to a question about the numbers of officers deployed in Worksop Town Centre, the Commissioner stated that he would not want to broadcast the numbers involved but that extra officers were brought in from other areas if required.
- Responding to a question about roads policing, the Commissioner stated that this subject had been in the news recently and that he would be speaking to the relevant Chief Inspector next week and would discuss the subject with the Chief Constable too, but did point out that other agencies than the police did police the roads.
- Regarding officer welfare, the Commissioner referred members to his public statement issued 2-3 weeks previously as well as the recent report produced by Police Chiefs. The Commissioner informed the Panel that he would be speaking to the Chief Constable about the way forward locally.
- The Panel thanked the Commissioner for providing them with a comprehensive report regarding absence levels.
- The Panel asked the Commissioner whether there were now financial figures available for the new financial year and the Commissioner undertook to provide the Panel with up to date figures.

RESOLVED 2020/021

That the contents of the report be noted.

7. NATIONAL AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENTS – POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER UPDATE

The Commissioner introduced the report, informing members that a large part of his time was spent working on the spending review and that he spoke to the Home Office and the Treasury most weeks. The Commissioner informed the Panel that the Chancellor should be making an announcement in the November budget.

The Commissioner spoke about the Airwave communication system used by the emergency services of Great Britain which was due to move to a digital platform at a tremendous cost and to a challenging timetable. The Commissioner assured the Panel that locally the planned transfer was proceeding well.

The Commissioner also spoke about the National Police Air Support (NPAS) and informed the Panel that there were significant issues which needed resolving with increased capital funding required.

The Commissioner referred to the forensics service which used to be organised on a force by force basis, but which was now organised both regionally and nationally with the involvement of the private sector. The Commissioner informed members that discussions about the way forward were planned.

The Commissioner spoke about the problems facing the East Midlands Criminal Justice Services (EMCJS), in particular the effects of COVID, which have meant the courts have not been able to function as well as normal with the Crown Courts being particularly affected.

Following the Commissioner's statement the Panel raised the following issues:

- The Panel praised the Force's successful use of drones and the Commissioner replied that debates were taking place on their use compared with helicopters and that this was an issue that had been picked up as part of the spending review. The Commissioner stated that he thought the use of drones would only increase in the future.
- Given the effects of COVID, the Panel requested a report on the state of the criminal justice system and asked why Nottinghamshire had not organised extra court sittings as other areas had done. The Deputy Commissioner replied that Her Majesty's Courts & Tribunals Service (HMCTS) was drawing up a report and a recovery plan but that there was frustration within the criminal justice system at the slow response. The Deputy Commissioner acknowledged that there were 'Nightingale' courts elsewhere in the Country but that there were none in the East Midlands, though a case was being made to change that. The Deputy Commissioner stated that a report on progress made and the remaining challenges facing the criminal justice system would be brought to the next meeting of the Panel.

RESOLVED 2020/022

That the contents of the report be noted.

8. HOME OFFICE REVIEW INTO THE ROLE OF POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONERS

The Commissioner introduced the report and informed the Panel that the Government had announced that the review would take place in 2 phases with the first phase taking place in November and the second phase taking place after the PCC elections in May 2021. The Commissioner informed members that he had seen the Home Office questions and was aware that the national office had submitted evidence to the Review Panel. The Commissioner stated that there was an aim to make PCCs more visible amid concern at the low turnout figures. The Commissioner informed the Panel that the Advisory Committee, of which he was a member, was due to meet for the first time this week. The Commissioner also informed members that the White Paper on devolution for councils was due to be published in October and that this may have implications for the PCC review. In conclusion the Commissioner informed the Panel that after 8 years as a PCC it was a good time to take stock and make recommendations for the future.

RESOLVED 2020/023

- 1) That the aims and timescales involved in the two stages of the review be noted.**
- 2) That the Panel Members' views submitted to the LGA on 21 August 2020 be noted.**
- 3) That a further update report be submitted to a future meeting of the Panel following the Home Office's publication of the outcomes of part one of the review.**

9. POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER'S ANNUAL REPORT 2019-20

The Commissioner stated that it was a lengthy report and asked members to comment within one month in writing via Mr Ford.

RESOLVED 2020/024

That the Panel consider the contents of the report and return any comments in writing to Mr Ford within one month.

10. POLICE AND CRIME PANEL ANNUAL REPORT 2019-20

Mr Ford introduced the report and informed members that he was pleased with the Annual Report considering that it was the first such report produced by the Panel. Mr Ford informed the Panel that he thought the member reference group had been very useful in drafting the report which was a good pointer for the future and from which lessons would be learned. Mr Ford asked the Panel to return comments to him on the format and content of the report within 2 weeks and informed members that he could share the report either electronically or through sending out hard copies.

Following the Mr Ford's introduction the Panel raised the following issues:

- The Panel suggested the possibility of sending the final report to town and parish councils, universities, schools, libraries and the Chair of the Bench so that it could be forwarded to magistrates.
- The Panel suggested making the entry on DV more prominent.

RESOLVED 2020/025

That subject to any changes requested by Members, the draft Annual Report be finalised and published on the Panel's webpages on the Nottinghamshire County Council website.

The meeting closed at 4.20pm

CHAIR